

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

DRAWINGS

The drawings have been objected to for failing to show every feature of the invention specified in claims 5 and 6. Each of the claimed features pointed out by the Examiner with respect to claim 5, as now amended, is listed below juxtaposed with the corresponding reference numeral in the drawings.

"portion projecting from the outer surface of the member": portion 37 projects from member 32.

"engagement portion": this term has been replaced hereinabove by --end face-- 52.

"ferrule has two ends": ferrule 32 certainly has two ends.

The elements "end portions..." at the end of claim 5 are not being explicitly claimed, as is evident from use of the term "adapted for" which precedes them.

Thus, claim 5 is in full compliance with Rule 37 CFR 1.83(a).

Claim 6 has been cancelled.

Claim 7 is also believed to be in full compliance with this Rule.

CLAIM OBJECTION

The Examiner contends that the term "said projecting portion" in lines 11 and 12 of claim 5 does not have an antecedent basis. The Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to lines 3-4 of claim 5 which recite "a portion projecting...". It is clear that "said projecting portion" refers back to "a portion projecting...". Thus, withdrawal of this objection is in order.

PATENTABILITY OF CLAIMS OVER PRIOR ART

Claims 5 and 6 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Valencia et al. ("Valencia"). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested in view

of the claim modifications made herein and in light of the following remarks.

Claim 5 recites that the end face 58 of member 32 abuts against abutment portion 53 of plug frame 33 to prevent movement of member 32 in the second direction. Contrastingly, in Valencia, it seems that the end face of the ferrule holder 2 does not abut against any portions of the body 4 to prevent movement of the ferrule holder 2 in the second direction. As is clear from the description in column 5, lines 64 to 67 of Valencia, in Valencia, an inclined rear surface of a lug 6 (which corresponds to the “projecting portion” 37 of the present invention) of a ferrule holder 2 (which corresponds to the “member” 32 of the present invention) abuts against a sloping front face 17a of a body 4 (which corresponds to the “plug frame” 33 of the present invention) to prevent movement of the ferrule holder 2 in a second direction. This arrangement in Valencia is, thus, different from what is recited in present claim 5.

Further, Valencia does not teach or suggest that “said ferrule has two ends adapted for respectively receiving end portions of core optical fibers of fiber optic cables of first and second optical connector components”, as recited in claims 5 and 7.

More specifically, in Valencia, ferrule 1 has only one end for receiving “end portion of core optical fiber of fiber optic cable of an optical connector component”. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to the preamble of claim 1 in Valencia. As is readily apparent, in Valencia only one engagement portion is formed at only one side of the body 4. Further, at the other side of the body 4, a fiber optic cable is fixed thereto in advance.

Contrastingly, in the present invention the ferrule has two ends. In other words, two engagement portions (49, 56) are provided at both sides of the plug frame (33). This is because the optical connector of the present invention is designed to have two ends for mounting another

optical connector element (which correspond to "first and second optical connector components" in the claims 5 and 7) on both sides thereof so that an optical signal can be relayed between these mounted optical connector elements via the optical connector of the present invention.

In this connection, in Valencia, a spring 3 is provided in the body 4. The spring 3 urges a flange portion of the ferrule holder 2 against a shoulder portion of the body 4. This is because Valencia's optical connector has only one coupling face for coupling to another optical connector element and, thus, it is preferable to urge the ferrule to the side portion to be connected with another optical connector element.

Contrastingly, in the present invention such a spring is not provided. In the present invention, it is preferable to floatingly support the member (32) without such a spring. This is because the optical connector of the present invention is designed to have two ends for mounting another optical connector element on both sides thereof.

In addition, in Valencia, due to the operation of the spring 3, it would not be possible to abut the end face of the ferrule holder 2 against any portions of the body 4.

New claim 7 includes the feature of "at least a portion of the outer surface of said member being deformable, so that said projected portion can be reduced in diameter". This deformable configuration is necessary to snap the projected portion into the hole. In Valencia, such a deformable configuration is provided to resilient beams S of the body 4 (which corresponds to the "plug frame" 33 not "member" 32 of the present invention).

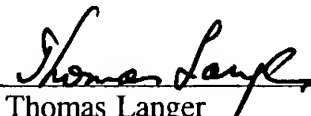
Based on all of the above, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 5 and 7 and dependent claim 8 are allowable. Prompt and favorable action to this effect is respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,

COHEN, PONTANI, LIEBERMAN & PAVANE

By 
Thomas Langer
Reg. No. 27,264
551 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1210
New York, New York 10176
(212) 687-2770

Dated: November 13, 2003